

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Brief Listing of Status of Claims

Claims 1, 10, 11, 12 and 17 are Amended.

Claims 3-9 and 13-16, and 20-21 are Previously Presented.

Claim 2, 18 and 19 are Cancelled.

1. (Amended) A wood cooking mixture comprising hardwood particles and a wood cooking aid, wherein the wood cooking aid comprises ~~comprising a blended mixture of fatty acid~~ component and a rosin acid component and/or salts thereof, and wherein said cooking aid comprises about 70 to about 2% fatty acids, ~~and~~ about 20 to about 98% rosin acids, and less than about 15%, saponifiable material.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Amended) The wood cooking aid mixture of claim 1 wherein said cooking aid comprises about 35 to about 80% rosin acids and about 55 to about 15% fatty acids.

4. (Amended) The wood cooking aid mixture of claim 1 wherein said rosin acids comprise tall oil rosin acids selected from the group consisting of abietic acid, dehydroabietic acid, palustric acid and all combinations thereof.

5. (Amended) The wood cooking aid mixture of claim 1 wherein said rosin acids comprise pimaric acid.

6. (Amended) The wood cooking aid mixture of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids are selected from the group consisting of vegetable based fatty acids, animal based fatty acids, and all combinations thereof.

7. (Amended) The wood cooking aid ~~aid~~ mixture of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids comprise unsaturated fatty acids.
8. (Amended) The wood cooking aid ~~aid~~ mixture of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids comprise oleic acid, linoleic acid and/or pinolenic acid.
9. (Amended) The wood cooking aid ~~aid~~ mixture of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids comprise branched fatty acids, conjugated fatty acids, synthetic fatty acids and/or cyclic fatty acids.
10. (Currently Amended) The wood cooking aid ~~aid~~ mixture of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids comprise ~~the~~ a monomer part produced during dimerization of fatty acids.
11. (Currently Amended) The wood cooking aid ~~aid~~ mixture of ~~claim 1~~ claim 10 wherein said monomer part contains branched oleic acids 13 to 20%, branched stearic acids 7 to 20%, oleic acid 15 to 25%, other fatty acids 28 to 58% the rest being unsaponifiable material.
12. (Currently Amended) The wood cooking aid ~~aid~~ mixture of ~~claim 1~~ claim 10 wherein the fatty acid distribution of said monomer part is branched oleic acids about 14 to about 16%, branched stearic acid about 13 to about 15%, oleic acid about 19 to about 21%, other fatty acids about 42 to about 44%.
13. (Amended) The wood cooking aid ~~aid~~ mixture of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids and said rosin acids are derived from tall oil.
14. (Amended) The wood cooking aid of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids and said rosin acids comprise fractions of distilled tall oil.

15. (Amended) The wood cooking aid of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids comprise 5,11,14-C20:3 and 11,14-C20:2.

16. (Amended) The wood cooking aid of claim 1 wherein said fatty acids and said rosin acids are derived from distilled tall oil and/or tall oil rosin and/or tall oil fatty acids.

17. (Currently Amended) A method for making processing hardwood particles ~~the wood cooking aid of claim 1~~ comprising the steps of:

contacting hardwood particles with a wood cooking aid, wherein the wood cooking aid comprises about 70 to about 2% fatty acids, and about 20 to about 98% rosin acids, and less than about 15%, saponifiable material

~~i) blending a fatty acid component with a rosin acid component to produce a fatty acid-rosin acid mixture;~~

~~— ii) reacting said fatty acid-rosin acid mixture with water and sodium hydroxide to form salts of said acids.~~

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Cancelled)

20. (Previously Presented) A method for cooking hardwood comprising the steps of:

- i) contacting hardwood particles with a cooking liquor comprising a cooking aid, and
- ii) heating said particles and liquor to a temperature between 140°C and 180°C

wherein said cooking aid comprises a blended mixture of about 70 to about 2% fatty acids, and about 20 to about 98% rosin acids and less than 15% unsaponifiable material.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 20 wherein said hardwood is birch.